

## AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the first paragraph on page 4 with the following amended paragraph:

In an embodiment of the present invention, isolated bacteria or bacterial strains capable of oxidizing ammonia to nitrite are provided. In one embodiment, the 16S rDNA of the bacteria or bacterial strains have the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:19 or SEQ ID NO:20. The nucleotide sequences described as SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:19 and SEQ ID NO:20 are exemplary of *Nitrosomonas aestuarii*-like AOB. The *Nitrosospira*-like AOB represented by SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:2 and SEQ ID NO:3 have been deposited with the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC) and have been assigned accession numbers PTA-1888, PTA-1887 and PTA-1885, respectively. The *Nitrosomonas*-like AOB represented by SEQ ID NO:4 has been deposited with the ATCC and has been assigned accession number PTA-1886. The *Nitrosomonas aestuarii*-like AOB represented by SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:19 and SEQ ID NO:20 have been deposited with the ATCC and have been assigned accession number PTA-5423.